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lived so near the time of Hesiod, whether before or after his time, and have made so gigantic a stride towards perfection;—that he could have produced such a prodigy of genius, at a time when even the art of committing things to *writing* was unknown; that the poems could have passed through so many ages by mere oral tradition, and still exhibit such unity—it is in short utterly impossible, as being contrary to the usual process of nature, that one man, in a rude age, and under every disadvantage, should produce at *once* such a work, as, to judge by analogy in other cases, would require successive improvements, and all the advantages of accumulated experience to produce. Add to this, that the *authentic* history of the manner in which these poems were edited, furnishes additional strength to the preceding conclusions. Does it not fairly warrant the idea, that 300 years of oral tradition in detached pieces must have contributed to disturb the original poem? That the vast variety of those who recited from memory only, might, from various motives, have added to, or taken from what they had learned? And that the collators of those collections would naturally choose or reject what came the nearest to their own ideas of excellence? It is not improbable too, that they would have found the necessity of sometimes interweaving a few connective verses.

Under all these circumstances, the idea surely is warrantable, that Homer, and the works now ascribed to him, are fairly separable. The fact seems to be, that such a person as Homer *did* exist, that he wrote some poems on the subject of the siege of Troy, and the wanderings of Ulysses; but that the poems *now* the subjects of our admiration, have attained to their unrivalled excel-

lence through the taste and judgment of their illustrious editor, and his able coadjutors, and that the poems, as originally written by Homer, compared with their present state, are like a child, the offspring of wretchedness and want, which, taken under the protection of some generous patron, has attained to manly vigour, and unequalled beauty.

WARDEN.

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*To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.*

THE letter in your last month's number, on the mysterious Junius, caught my attention most forcibly, and I turned to it immediately, but, I must say, to my disappointment; and perhaps every discussion on the question, who was Junius? will end in the same manner. Yet it is singular, that the *shadow*\* has been of no use to direct us to the *substance*. As I have not seen the December Magazine, I cannot conceive why A. P. is so angry at the supposition of Mr. Boyd being the author of those famous letters; and am inclined to suppose, as your March correspondent seems to do, that he conceives Boyd to have been incapable of such productions. Boyd is so little known as a writer, except by mere report, that it is not in the power of many to give an opinion of his merits: but it happens rather singularly, that his son, a gentleman of extensive classical acquirements, should coincide in opinion with A. P. so far, as to declare his firm persuasion to be, that his father was *not* the author of them, but differ so widely in the reason he gives for that opinion. For he thinks the letters *unworthy* of his father. It is certainly a fact, that Chalmers, the same who has distinguished him-

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\* Stat nominis umbra.

self by the publication of the *Caledonia*, has been at the pains to sift the wheat of Junius, and carefully present to the public the few withered grains he found. Yet, I believe, every admirer of sound argument, elegance with ease, and energy without harshness, will admire Junius, when the dull, uninteresting laboriousness of the plodding antiquary shall be forgotten.

You will infer from this, that I differ from both. I certainly conceive Mr. Boyd not to have been Junius—not because, with his son, I think he could have written better; nor because, with A.P., I should suppose him incapable, but because, from what *little* I have seen of his writings, and from what I have heard of him, I suppose him to have possessed a different style in expression—so very different, as would seem to bespeak a mind of an entirely dissimilar mould, one that could not even assume an appearance so unlike itself.

Whoever Junius was, he certainly wrote with *all his heart*; and it must be almost an impossibility for any one, writing in the ardour of his feelings, to constrain himself in the expression, and still retain the tone of nature so plain in what Junius has left. On comparison of all I have read on the subject, no one seems to me, in what remains of his expressions, to approach so near the sharp-edged energy of the letters, as Lord Chatham.

If your last correspondent can advance any proof that Mr. Boyd is the *real* author, he may assure himself of the thanks of many an anxious inquisitive. But if he means to go into a mere investigation of Mr. Boyd's ability to have produced such a work, I am apprehensive he will fail in exciting much interest.

Yours, &c.

WARDEN.

*To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.*

IN my statement of the Optical experiment with the sparrow's feather, published in your Magazine for February, I was in error when I stated, that a chicken's feather would answer the purpose as well as a sparrow's. I find, on more minute examination, that it does not exhibit all the primitive colours, as the sparrow's is found to do.

I am, &c.

Armagh.

J.S.

*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

#### SKETCH OF CLONMEL.

WHILE we stretch our gaze to a distance, to admire the beauties of nature, of art, or of those more worthy objects of admiration, the deeds of benevolence, we forget that we meet them at home, and glance hastily over what has a stronger claim to our attention, and affords a better opportunity of imitation. These reflections naturally arise, while I contemplate the ancient town of Clonmel, the adjoining scenery, and the pursuits of its inhabitants. The name of this town Spenser has honoured in his *Fairy Queen*, when he describes the rivers of Ireland attending the marriage of the Thames and the Medway. Spenser was a native of this country, otherwise, I suppose, our rivers would have remained

“By fame neglected, and unknown to song.”

After describing the spring at the foot of the mountain of Slieve Bloom, from which issue the Suir, Nore, and Barrow, he introduces,

“The gentle Suir, which making way  
By sweet Clonmel, adorns rich Watersford.”